593 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
833 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
843 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
842 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not schooled on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *munywalo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
837 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ng'adimana gi a gwo, mosadi a sa ng'adime*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women, he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Muridi (shadow) is conceived of as an evil potency, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have [845] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die: hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whose grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *muridi*. ● [843] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *muridi*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite ([illegible]), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *muridi*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *muridi*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a [832 mild form of *muridi*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife 843] sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Muridi* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of [illegible] (*Amaranthus Thunbergii*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

753 826 A person whose upper teeth appear before the lower or whose molars appear first is full of *muridi* and should be killed. In the area surrounding the royal village every child is brought to the queen for examination on the appearance of its first teeth. The mother carries with her a small basket of eleusine and, if all is well, it is said that the child has 'danced

783 not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and contagious
force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible
753 counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions
or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction,
including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage
(regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance
of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor.
'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities
as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent
concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of
people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

783 Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*.
A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born
753 child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to
834 warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware
of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general
vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain
from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox
epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a
worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex
intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would
be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach
a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it
without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi*
affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it.
[826] Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshega*) are full of *muridi* and
were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have
to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there
is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings
from the teeth of the *leshega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary
sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects
● [843] these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long
journeys from home.

783 *Muridi* is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly
to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other
753 injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country
generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of
the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary
remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will